CITY OF WILMINGTON
NORTH CAROLINA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 5, 2006
Update 6 – 4:45 p.m.

City continues repair work on River Road sewer pipe break

The city is bringing in special pumps and tanker trucks as it continues efforts tonight to repair the punctured forcemain sewer pipe on River Road.

Currently, large sheets of metal are being driven into the ground to make a hole so workers can get to the pipe to make the repair. Large repair sleeves that will be wrapped around the ruptured pipe late tonight when flow through the pipe is lowest are being transported from Alabama.

Also, tankers are being brought in to retrieve the wastewater at two pump stations before it flows into the forcemain pipe so that workers have more time to work on the repair.

Approximately 2 million gallons of wastewater flow through the River Road forcemain each day. City officials estimate that roughly half of the flow is being retrieved via tanker trucks each day. By 5 p.m. today, the city estimates a total of 4 million gallons will have spilled, with about 2 million gallons being retrieved by tanker trucks that have been pumping wastewater continuously since the spill was discovered.

Wastewater not captured has spilled into the nearby Cape Fear River. The state has issued a precautionary swimming advisory for the Cape Fear River in New Hanover and Brunswick counties.

The forcemain broke on Monday afternoon after a contractor for a local utility hit it while excavating to install underground utilities. The spill is located at the intersection of River Road and Shipyard Boulevard, at the entrance to the state Ports facility.

The city has also begun water quality testing and will have initial results later today.

As a precaution, the city recommends that citizens not come into contact with the water.

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For more information, contact city Public Information Officer Malissa Talbert at 342-2736 or 470-8720.